

The historic meeting of the five key political actors of the Ivorian crisis at the Felix Houphouet Boigny Foundation for Peace Research on February 27-28 2006, in Yamoussoukro ushered in a new dawn and rekindled hope in the peace process in Cote d'Ivoire. Chaired by the new Prime Minister of consensus, Charles Konan Banny, the significance of the meeting resided in the fact that the belligerents were meeting on Ivorian soil for the first time, since the outbreak of the violent conflict in September 2002. Within the framework of UN Resolution 1633 of the Security Council and the road map to peace in Cote d'Ivoire traced by President Thabo Mbeki and endorsed by the International Working Group (IWG), Charles Konan Banny has undertaken a number of initiatives in this regard. It had become clear that the Ivorian crisis needed an Ivorian of unique calibre and integrity, capable of rallying key political actors, to envision a new direction and future with peace as the cardinal focus. The top-notch banker appears to be the one. In his first public pronouncement after his appointment, Konan Banny raised what WANEP in its antecedent briefs evoked: mutual trust and confidence that had eluded the divided and polarized country. "I hope that trust will return to this country," Banny lamented.

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